

Ease by Luddleston

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Summary:

The days of the Inquisition are three decades gone, and Dorian and Bull have been enjoying every minute they've had together.

Or, Dorian and Bull are old and cute and still very in love.

Ease

Author's Note:

IDK I JUST NEEDED OLD MAN FLUFF.

In case anyone needs any background on the Inquisitor's kid they're talking about, my Lavellan, Nic, has a daughter about 5 months after the end of Inquisition.

“I hear your apprentice is getting herself into trouble again,” Bull says one afternoon, squinting at a letter from the former Inquisitor. Dorian’s told him a dozen times that he should give up and wear spectacles, like a respectable person, but Bull refuses on account of “it would look stupid with the eyepatch.” Dorian can’t find fault with that argument, so he simply rolls his eyes at Bull whenever he catches him trying to read something with his one remaining eye, which isn’t even very good at reading anymore.

He snatches the letter from Bull, because he is a respectable person who wears spectacles, and glances it over. “She’ll be fine,” he says, “it sounds like nothing further than her usual trouble.”

“She gets herself into weird shit,” Bull agrees.

“She is the Inquisitor’s daughter.”

Their villa is quiet on summer evenings, when it’s just the two of them, the staff gone for the evening. Dorian likes to sit on the balcony once the summer heat has abated (it’s odd how the intense heat of Tevinter he used to love now makes him a little dizzy), curled up against Bull on the couch, a cold glass of tea dripping condensation on the side table. Bull’s fingers steadily undo the braid Dorian put his hair into this morning, thumb rubbing the dip at the base of his skull. The motion makes Dorian relax even more against the Bull, and he sets the letter down, nudging it so it’s not too close to the ring of water his glass is creating.

Bull loosens Dorian's braid until it's a trail of silver half-curls over one shoulder, bright against his skin. He's long since given up on dyeing it, especially after Bull told him it looked beautiful. He's always been a sucker for Bull's compliments.

"Kind of wish I could go out there and fight alongside her," Bull says.

"Not on your life," Dorian replies, "you'd get yourself killed, and then I'd have to go about the rest of my years dressed in black, which is far too limiting. And with your limp? You'd be absolutely no help to anyone on the battlefield."

"Yeah, yeah, I know." Bull sighs, Dorian feels his chest move under his head. "I just get kind of, agh, I dunno. Jumpy, sometimes. Doesn't help that Krem won't let me near the Chargers' plans now that he took it over."

"You've done it for years, stop pestering Krem," Dorian says, taking Bull's hand in his, tracing his fingers over the ridges of Bull's bones and knuckles.

"Sounds like something Krem would say."

"Do not compare me to him."

"Never, Kadan." Bull dips his head to kiss the crown of Dorian's head.

"For as much as you want to be young again, I find I'm alright with where we're at now," Dorian says, and Bull grips his hand in return.

"I am too."

Dorian turns in his lap to face Bull, and it's an effort to reposition himself, but he's rewarded by Bull kissing him on the forehead. He traces his fingers along one of Bull's horns, the one that was partially broken off years ago in some battle or another. The other is full of nicks and cracks, but all of them have been smoothed over by the years. Bull tips Dorian's chin up to press a kiss to his lips, runs his thumb over the smile lines on Dorian's cheek when he grins. Bull's still combing his fingers through Dorian's hair.

“You know it’s going to take me an age to braid that up again tomorrow,” he says, and when he speaks, his mustache tickles Bull’s lip.

“You should just leave it down sometimes,” Bull replies, kissing the side of Dorian’s nose.

“Or, you could—“ he pauses to kiss Bull, “—just stop taking it down every evening.”

“Nah,” Bull says, fingers gently running over the softest parts of Dorian’s throat. “That wouldn’t be any fun at all.”

It’s comfortable to lean into Bull’s chest, one of his arms fitted to the curve of his back. Bull is warm underneath him, warmer than the relative chill of the night air. He can feel Bull breathing under him and he takes one of Bull’s hands in his again (the one that isn’t missing fingers), matching each of his fingertips to Bull’s. He glances up at Bull’s face—his single eye is half-closed and unfocused, like he’s about to fall asleep.

“You’re going to have to eventually do something about your eyesight,” Dorian says, “or you won’t be able to see me anymore, and that would be a travesty.”

“I know what you look like.” Bull fits his fingers into the spaces between Dorian’s. “I’ve been looking at you for the last thirty years.”

“You mean, you’ve been blessed with the gorgeousness of my face for the last thirty years.”

Bull hums his agreement, and Dorian he can’t hide the way he’s smiling. He’s certain Bull can feel it against his chest. Bull’s hand is comforting in his, familiar. He drifts for a moment, eyes fluttering closed. Bull’s thumb runs over Dorian’s knuckle, and then he repeats the motion over and over until Dorian’s breathing slows to the point of near-sleep.

“Want to go to bed?” Bull asks him suddenly, and it startles his brain into wakefulness again.

“Mm,” Dorian says, “the night is young.”

“Yeah, but we sure as hell aren’t.”

“You have a point, there.”

Dorian unfolds himself from Bull’s lap, stretching his knees out before standing. He’s stiff from being in the same position for so long, but he’s been being held by Bull, so he doesn’t mind. He places his hands on Bull’s shoulders and leans down to kiss the top of his head, chuckling when he hears Bull blow his hair out of his face. “And you complain about me braiding it,” he sighs, shaking his head.

“Yeah, yeah, well you’re the one who always rolls onto it in your sleep, then somehow justifies keeping it that long.” Bull stands, muttering a soft curse because the weather has been shifting and his leg is giving him trouble again. Dorian would give him a hand, but Bull outweighs him by enough that it would be more trouble than help.

Dorian could go through their evening rituals without thinking, and he’s sure Bull does as well. The routine is comfortable to fall into every night, and it’s reassuring that he knows what Bull’s doing without looking.

He can hear Bull undo his brace, knows he must be taking off the eyepatch just after. Bull’s never been one for sleeping in his clothes, but Dorian wears a loose robe to bed because he’s long since tired of waking to find that Bull was hogging the blankets and he’d just about frozen his ass off. He’s told Bull a number of times that perhaps he wouldn’t have to steal the covers away if he didn’t sleep in the buff, but Bull always responds with, “you know what they say about old habits,” and then tells him the story of the time he and the Chargers were ambushed by bandits in the middle of the night and Bull fought them off completely naked, which never fails to make Dorian laugh.

Dorian finishes brushing out his hair (it’s always a mess after Bull’s been playing with it), and he gets into bed beside Bull and rolls onto his side, lying, as he always does, with his head on one of Bull’s shoulders and an arm slung around Bull’s chest. Bull curls the arm that’s around Dorian and

reaches for his right hand, the one that's tucked in between them, the fingers holding his much less callused than they were the first time Bull squeezed his hand while they slept like this, a soft moment of comfort in a world that had been practically turned sideways. Now, it's a quick "goodnight" at the end of a long day.

"Sleep well, Kadan," Bull tells him.

Dorian shifts against him, just enough that he can find the comfortable spot he always sleeps in. "I'll try. Your snoring has gotten horrendous now that it's drier," he laments.

"Still not as bad as yours."

"I do *not* snore."

"Sure. And I don't steal the blankets."

Dorian smiles, because he remembers a time when their conversations were all sniping and insults, and they weren't said with the softness that Bull speaks with now. He remembers a time when Bull wouldn't have punctuated a sentence with a hand on Dorian's hip, rubbing little circles into sore places. He remembers them, but they're distant, and it's been a long time since either of them have meant their sarcastic barbs, or have looked into each other's eyes with anything besides softness and adoration. He's glad that they're at the point where they can shift from bickering to Dorian quietly whispering, "I love you," face pressed to the Bull's skin.

"You too, Kadan," Bull says, and Dorian rests easy in his arms.